Karin Garcia

Reading 4402

Kary Johnson

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Novel Study: *“Wonder”*

The book *“Wonder”* by R.J. Palacio is a contemporary novel which was released in February of 2012. The book is about a 10 year old boy named August Pullman (Auggie) who has a face deformity due to several genetic abnormalities. Since August has had 27 surgeries in his life so far, he has been unable to go to a public school and has been homeschooled by his mother. Now with no surgeries in the near future, Auggie’s parents have decided to enroll him in school for the first time. The book follows Auggie’s first year of school from his point of view. Auggie is used to people not wanting to look at him but his first year of school proves to be both exciting and difficult through making friends to also being bullied. All Auggie wants is to be a normal kid who looks like everyone else. Yet he discovers through the story what makes him such a “wonder” to others. The book also goes through narrator changes as different chapters are seen from other characters points of view. Not only does the reader get to experience the life of Auggie through his mind but they get to experience Auggie through the eyes of others. The book is beautiful, funny, and yet sad.

When I started reading *“Wonder”* I immediately could not put it down. It was easy to read and beautifully written from the point of view of a 10 year old boy. During the story the author changed narrators from the points of view of not only August but from all the characters of the book. It gave the characters a relatable aspect and helped the reader to appreciate each one of them. I loved how the book felt like I was inside the character’s heads and I had access to all of their personal thoughts and emotions. I experienced many emotions during this book from crying in some parts to laughing out loud in others.

I could and would see myself using this in a classroom of third to fourth grade students. I know that the students would get a lot out of this book from seeing the perspective of someone who is different. We all experience bullying in our lives and trying to find true friendships. This book allows people to see the world through a boy that has been different and made fun of his entire life. I could see students who are bullied being able to relate to August and finding ways to help get through it. I could see students who are bullies themselves learning what it’s like to be the victim for once from August. Not only does this book offer literary benefit to students but it also provides some very important lessons that all students should learn. I’m hoping that by having students read this book that they will be able to come out of it a better reader and a better person. On the literary aspect we will focus on character traits, character changes, narrator changes, and lessons learned by the characters. From a more personal aspect we will be able to analyze life through August’s eyes and how we can use this book to help others who are different like August.

SRE Framework

Pre-reading Activities:

1. Relating the Reading to Student’s Lives: I will give the students this quote from the book “I won’t describe what I look like. Whatever you’re thinking, it’s probably worse.” The students will discuss in groups their personal experiences with bullies and what they think about this quote.
2. Considering Literary Elements: I will give students who need extra reading support information on narration changes between characters in the story. (Differentiated)
3. Activate or Building Background Knowledge: More skilled readers will research August’s disease from the book known as multifactorial inheritance. (Differentiated)
4. Predicting: Based on their experiences with bullying I will pose questions about what they think will happen in the book.

During Reading Activities:

1. Reading to Students: I will pre read to all students the first seven pages of the book to set the tone, setting, mode, and narration. The students will follow along in their own copies.
2. Silent Reading: More skilled readers will continue to read to page 34 independently.
3. Reading to Students: I will read out loud to less skilled students to page 34. (Differentiated)

Post Reading Activities:

1. Questioning: I will ask the students questions regarding fellings and emotions in the book, the characters, and specific events.
2. Writing: Students will write about their feelings toward the book and write about which character they were able to relate to the most.
3. Application and Outreach Activities: Students will relate their own lives to the book and think of ideas on how they can prevent bullying or help others.